



Vol. 1 ♦ Issue 12 ♦ Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan ♦ Oct. 27, 2007

Polish soldiers excel at counter IED training

by Marine Staff Sgt. Luis P. Valdespino Jr.
CSTC-A Public Affairs

GARDEZ – Polish soldiers assigned to mentor Afghan National Army soldiers recently underwent counter improvised explosive device training, earning high praise from other coalition troops.

Like previous Operational Mentoring Liaison Teams, the Polish soldiers assigned to mentor the 203rd ANA Corps received similar training before deploying to Afghanistan.

They still saw the additional training administered by International Security Assistance Force and Task Force Phoenix personnel as an opportunity to reinforce their skills as mentors.

The Polish OMLT identified all the IED indicators planted by course instructors U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Raymond E. Odum, the counter IED chief senior assistant for ISAF, and Kris A. Anderson, a counter IED advisor assigned to ISAF.



photo by Marine Staff Sgt. Luis P. Valdespino Jr.

A Polish soldier looks for improvised explosive devices or IED indicators during a counter IED course in Gardez.

taught.

The instructors said the Polish OMLT performed better in the exercise than any previous group they had

taught.

“They did an outstanding job. They’re the first ones to actually find all the IED indicators,” said Odum.

Airmen help Afghans stand up flight medicine clinic

by Air Force Staff Sgt. Trevor Tiernan
U.S. CENTCOM Air Forces Public Affairs

Like many airmen around the world, U.S. Air Force Maj. Mical Kupke’s day starts with a brief meeting to plan out the day’s events. But that’s where the similarity ends.

The flight surgeon and her team’s day involves mentoring members of the Afghan National Army Air Corps in the field of flight medicine and assisting them with standing up a flight medicine clinic.

Kupke, along with U.S. Air Force Capt. Marilyn Thomas, a flight nurse; U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Brian Engle, a public health technician; and U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Janet Wilson, an aeromedical technician; make up part of the ANAAC advisers group at the Kabul International Airport

in Afghanistan.

The mentoring process begins with assessing each of the Afghan airmen’s individual ability and skill level, Kupke said.

“It starts out one-on-one,” Kupke said. “We talk one-on-one with an interpreter just to figure out what someone’s knowledge base is and what they know.”

From there the mentors determine what training or mentoring the airmen require and what skill they need to improve. The mentors either provide in-depth training -- according to the task at hand -- or take a more hands-off approach, merely providing guidance and suggestions as the Afghan airmen go to work.

See **Medical** next page

Medical

Continued from previous page

"It's a very dynamic process," Thomas said. "We come out here daily and interact with them. Depending on the plan for the day, we'll either do training, or we'll mentor and just give them advice and suggestions about how to better manage their clinic."

The Air Force team trains the ANAAC on how to safely load patients onto aircraft, how to set up the laboratory, combat life saver skills, basic life support, and what Kupke identified as a key priority -- casualty and medical evacuation.

A U.S. trained flight surgeon is required to sign off on the flight physicals. Currently that person is Kupke, but she hopes to get a U.S. trained Afghan flight surgeon who will, in turn, train their fellow airmen.

"(Our goal) is to train them to do this themselves so basically our job is done," said Engle. "The ultimate goal for Afghanistan is for us to be able to step away as the ANA becomes self-sustaining."

Engle and the rest of the team members are already seeing progress.

"I'm starting to step away from some of the stuff that they're doing," he said. "They are very smart people, so we're just giving them our perspective. It's really rewarding to see them press on with their own thing and not need us over their shoulder 24/7."



photo by Marine Staff Sgt. Luis P. Valdespino Jr.

Laying a brick: Army Staff Sgt. Lonnie L. Russell (left) assists in laying bricks for a housing unit at Forward Operating Base Camp Lightening. Russell, from Beaufort, S.C., is one of four combat engineers in Gardez mentoring and assisting Afghan masons. The combat engineers are assigned to Task Force Phoenix Engineer Company in Kabul.



CSTC-A News is a publication of the Combined Security Transition Command - Afghanistan and Department of Defense. CSTC-A is published weekly by the CSTC-A Public Affairs Office, Camp Eggers, Kabul, Afghanistan.

In accordance with DoD Instruction 5120.4, this DoD newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military overseas.

Contents of the *CSTC-A News* are not necessarily the official view of, or endorsed by the U.S. government or DoD.

CSTC-A News Editorial Staff

CSTC-A commander: Maj. Gen. Robert W. Cone

PAO: Lt. Col. David G. Johnson

Deputy PAO: Lt. Cmdr. Clint Larson

NCOIC: Petty Officer 1st Class Dave Votroubek

Editor: Tech. Sgt. Cortchie Welch

Writer: Marine Staff Sgt. Luis P. Valdespino Jr.

Writer: Petty Officer 2nd Class Brian Seymour

Mission Statement

The mission of the Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan, in partnership with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the international community, is to plan, program and implement structural, organizational, institutional and management reforms of the Afghanistan National Security Forces in order to develop a stable Afghanistan, strengthen the rule of law and deter and defeat terrorism within its borders.